

Name: _____ Date: _____ Class: _____

**1****2 Whatever happened to?****3****Requirements:**

Large World map

Coloured pencils and paper

Calculator

3.1 Group Activity 1: Is Australia an Important Biodiversity Hotspot?

Australia's biodiversity is very rich. Australia is a large country with a diverse range of habitats which stretch from tropical rain forests through deserts to alpine grasslands and from rich cool ocean waters to tropical coral reefs. The size of Australia alone accounts for some of its diversity.

Australia is an island continent and has experienced a long period of isolation; as a result many of its species are endemic i.e. found nowhere else on Earth.

TABLE 1.1: AUSTRALIAN SPECIES: ENDEMIC AND THREATENED

Animals	Number of species	Endemic species	% Endemic
Mammals	252	225	
Birds	497	387	
Reptiles	876	760	

Source: World Resources Institute, Earth Trends available at <http://earthtrends.wri.org/> downloaded May 2010

1. Calculate the percentage of each species which are endemic to Australia, accurate to the nearest whole number.
2. Create a graph large enough for your group's wall display from the data obtained above. If you are unsure of an appropriate type of graph, talk to your teacher.
3. Name and find a photograph of at least 2 endemic species found in Australia for each category.
4. How does Australia benefit from having a large number of endemic species?

Comparison with Other Countries

GEO 01

Note: Values provided in Tables 1.1 and 1.2 are from different sources and for different periods. This explains some of the variation in the statistics provided.

TABLE 1.2: COMPARISON OF NUMBER OF ENDEMIC SPECIES IN SELECTED COUNTRIES

Country	% of Endemic species		
	Mammals	Birds	Reptiles
Australia	79	54	86
New Zealand	40	49	92
Indonesia	49	27	59
Brazil	29	12	41
USA	24	10	28
India	14	6	48
South Africa	14	1	31
Tanzania	5	3	21
Canada	4	1	0
United Kingdom	0	0	0

Source: World Resources Institute quoted in Measures of Australia's Progress, 2002 cat. No. 1370.0

5. Use a world map to a size suitable for a wall display. Identify the countries shown in Table 1.2.
6. Create proportional symbols placed over each country or graded colours to represent the data shown in Table 1.2.
7. Is Australia an important biodiversity hotspot?